ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Allocation of Kerosene to NE States

*1. SHRI DWIJENDRA NATH SHARMAH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the per capita availability and consumption of kerosene in the North-Eastern States, State-wise *vis-a-vis* the national average; and

(b) the details of the steps taken or proposed to be taken by Government to increase the allocation of kerosene to North-Eastern States?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) and (b) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) For the year 2002-2003, per capita allocation for distribution under Public Distribution System in North-Eastern States is as under:—

States	Per Capita Allocation (Litres/annum)
Arunachal Pradesh	11.5
Assam	12.6
Manipur	11.2
Meghalaya	11.5
Mizoram	9.7
Nagaland	8.6
Tripura	12.7

The national average for the year 2002-2003 is 12 litres per annum.

(b) At present, there is no proposal to increase the allocation of kerosene to North-Eastern States.

SHRI DWIJENDRA NATH SHARMAH: Madam, I would like to thank the hon. Minister for giving information about the per capita availability and consumption of kerosene in the North-Eastern States. But, from the reply, it is clear that out of seven States, five States, namely, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Nagaland, have been allotted

less than the national average. I would like to know from the hon. Minister as to why the allocation for these States has been below the national average, and when the hon. Minister is going to increase this quota for these States.

SHRI RAM NAIK: Madam, basically, this aspect was decided in a traditional way, long ago. So, depending upon various circumstances, it was decided much earlier, that is, in 1996-97 itself. In some States, electricity is available more; in some States, LPG is abundant. So, on that basis, this was decided. What we have done is, we are maintaining the *status quo*. And, when we are giving additional LPG, we reduce the quota to that extent. So, by and large, the balance is maintained. That is why we have not changed it. And, this would also not be possible because many things go in deciding the quota for each State.

SHRI DWIJENDRA NATH SHARMAH: Madam, I do not agree with the hon. Minister; there are a lot of remote areas in the North-East where kerosene is being used for lighting. There is no electricity in many places. When this is the situation, how can the quota be reduced? Now, it has been mentioned in the statement of the hon. Minister — I have my own information — that the per capita allocation of kerosene to Assam is 12.6 litres per annum. But as far as my information is concerned, it is incorrect, because, in Assam, people are getting kerosene at the rate of five litres per individual per annum. Even in April, 2001, the existing quota was reduced by the Petroleum Ministry. Now, here, it is shown that 12.6 litres per capita allocation has been made. This is wrong. It is below 8 litres that the people are getting in Assam. That too, does not go to the poor people in remote places. Therefore, I would like to know whether the Minister has any information that kerosene, which is very much needed in remote places, is being sold in black market by the black marketeers.

SHRI RAM NAIK: Madam, I would like to reiterate that the figures, which are given here, are correct. If the hon. Member has any other figures or any other proof, he can give it to me and I will get them verified. So far as diversion of kerosene, its adulteration, its sale in the black market etc. are concerned, I do agree that these things do happen. But basically it is a subject wherein the State Government has to be active and do that work, because public distribution is under the State Government. We also

impress upon the State Governments to be active in this area. At the all-India level also, we have formed an Anti-adulteration Cell. Whenever such information is received, they also take some action. But, basically, it is the State Government, which takes the action, and on that basis the work is done.

श्री स्वराज कौशल: मैं मंत्री जी के ध्यान में लाना चाहता हूं कि इंडो बंगलादेश बार्डर अपने आप में बहुत बैकवार्ड है और उसमें जो गांव चिटगांव हिल ट्रेक्ट से सटे हुए हैं वे सबसे ज्यादा बैकवार्ड हैं, वहां बिजली भी नहीं है जैसे कि अभी माननीय सदस्य ने कहा। उसके साथ-साथ वहां पर कैरोसिन की बहुत किल्लत है क्योंकि सात दिन तो एक आम आदमी को वहां पहुंचने में लगते हैं। वहां पैट्रोलियम प्रोडक्ट को पहुंचाने में अपने आप में बहुत ज्यादा कवायत रहती है। मैं आदरणीय मंत्री जी से जानना चाहता हूं कि क्या चिटगांव हिल ट्रेक्ट से सटे हुए गांव जो इंडो बंगलादेश बार्डर पर हैं वहां पर कैरोसिन का प्रबंध करवाने के लिए कोई स्टेप्स उठाएंगे? धन्यवाद।

SHRI RAM NAIK: Madam, again, this comes under the State Government. What we do from the Centre is that the allocation is given on annual basis and again on quarterly basis. Now, the hon. Member is referring to Tripura. In Tripura, we have not reduced the quantum of allocation of kerosene. If there are any such difficulties being faced, it is the State Government, which will look into it. But, since the hon. Member has brought it to my notice just now, I will ensure that the State Government acts, because subsequent distribution of kerosene is done by the State Government.

SHRI RISHANG KEISHING: Madam, notwithstanding the fact that the allocation for the North-East is below the national level, I would like to know whether the Government is aware that more than half of the supply of kerosene is sold in the black market, and less than half of it is brought to the consumers. To this effect representations has been made, times and again, by the consumers there, that action should be taken against these people, but nothing has happened so far. Dealers are not appointed by the State Government. I think they are appointed by the companies. Now, I would like to know the action the Government will take. If the State Government cannot take the action, should a representation be made to the Central Government to see to it that their dealerships are cancelled because of such allegations?

SHRI RAM NAIK: Madam, if there is a specific complaint against any dealer that he is diverting it, it is for the oil company as well as for the Government to certainly take action against that dealer because the dealers,

as of now, are being appointed by the public sector undertakings, which means, we can also take action against them. We are doing that. Only for that purpose, the Anti-Adulteration Cell has been formed to check mischief which is played by dealers. I would like to appeal to the Members that they should inform me of such cases so that I can also act. But, on the whole, I can say that adulteration is reduced, but it is not reduced to that extent of which any one can be proud of.

SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN: Madam, some anomalies in distribution of kerosene have been detected in several districts of Assam. The quantity of kerosene supplied to several districts has been reduced drastically, though the Ministry has supplied kerosene according to the national standard. It has been reported in the local Press that in certain districts like Morigaon and others, kerosene supplied under the Public Distribution System is being sold in the black market at Rs. 20 per litre. Due to these anomalies and corrupt practices, the common people suffer the most. I would like to know from the hon. Minister as to what mechanism they have put in place to prevent such anomalies and corrupt practices. Is the Ministry determined to prevent such practices?

SHRI RAM NAIK: Madam, I have already said that under the Petroleum Ministry, we had, just two years back, formed an Anti-Adulteration Cell on all-India basis. Under that, there are four regional headquarters, from where we are acting. But, I must again appeal to everyone to let us make anti-adulteration as a people's movement. Wherever we come to know that some adulteration is taking place, it should be brought to our notice. If the information is given, then action will be taken. That is the only way of dealing with the situation.

Bifurcation of UTI

*2. SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN:†
SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:

Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Unit Trust of India (UTI) has been split into two parts namely UTI-I and UTI-II;

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri V.V. Raghavan.